

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ASUNCI 04297 190255Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----100268 190258Z /62  
R 181900Z OCT 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1379

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 4297

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SNAR PA  
SUBJECT: ROLE OF DEA

REF STATE 243817

1. FOLLOWING ARE MY VIEWS, KEYED TO QUESTIONS POSED  
REFTEL.

2. A. DEA'S ROLE OVERSEAS SHOULD BE TO REDUCE/CURTAIN  
THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS TO THE US. HOW THIS IS DONE WILL  
DEPEND ON THE ENVIRONMENT IN EACH COUNTRY, AND IN ALL  
CASES SHOULD BE CLOSELY MONITORED BY THE EMBASSY.

B. YES.

(1) BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULT, OFTEN HOSTILE  
ENVIRONMENT (WIDESPREAD CORRUPTION INVOLVING HIGHLY  
PLACED HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS) DEA GIVES TOP PRIORITY  
TO INTELLIGENCE, WITH ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST TARGETS  
OF INTEREST TO THE US (HEROIN OR COCAINE TRAFFICKERS)  
SELDOM FEASIBLE IN COUNTRY. DEA ALSO SEEKS TO ENCOURAGE  
GREATER LOCAL ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITY AND TO PROVIDE  
SOME TRAINING, BOTH PER SE AND BECAUSE THESE ACTIVITIES  
ARE THE RAISON D'ETRE OF DEA HERE AND HELP CREATE A  
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CLIENT BASE FROM WHICH INTELLIGENCE ASSETS MAY BE DRAWN  
OR DEVELOPED.

(2) YES. THIS IS DEA'S PRINCIPAL TASK IN  
PARAGUAY.

(3) DEA'S INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES ARE SELF-  
INITIATED. DEA ALSO ATTEMPTS TO HELP ITS LOCAL COUNTER-  
PART (CREATED UNDER DEA GUIDANCE) FOCUS ITS ENFORCEMENT

ACTIVITIES.

(4) ABSOLUTELY. THERE IS CLOSE COORDINATION BETWEEN DEA AND EMBASSY, WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND DCM PROVIDING DIRECT GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT.

(5) NA TO DATE IN PARAGUAY.

C. YES.

D. EXCELLENT INTRA-POST RELATIONS. THE SAIC HAS IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO ME AND TO THE AMBASSADOR, AND I MEET WITH HIM ON A DAILY BASIS.

(1) VERY RESPONSIVE. DURING MY THREE-PLUS YEARS AT POST, THIS HAS NEVER BEEN A PROBLEM.

(2) IT IS ADHERING FULLY. THERE HAVE BEEN NO INCIDENTS.

E. DEA'S RELATIONS WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT ARE EXCELLENT AND CLOSE AT THE WORKING LEVEL, WITH THE LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCY. THEY ARE CORRECT (NOT CLOSE OR CORDIAL) WITH THE TOP GOP OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURITY, I.E., THE INTERIOR MINISTER AND HIS DEPUTY. THE AMBASSADOR OR DCM DEAL WITH THESE INDIVIDUALS ON NARCOTICS MATTERS.

F. NO. THE ASUNCION DISTRICT OFFICE (ADO) IS SUPPOSED TO NUMBER THREE OFFICERS AND ONE SECRETARY. WE ARE LUCKY IF WE HAVE TWO OFFICERS ON HAND AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT, AND AT TIMES OF PARTICULARLY INTENSE ACTIVITY - E.G., THE NEED TO MONITOR AND/OR INVESTIGATE PERSISTENT REPORTS DURING THE PAST 48 MONTHS OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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MOVEMENT OR LOCAL STORAGE OF HUNDREDS OF KILOS OF HEROIN - DEA HAS HAD TO PROVIDE TDY ASSISTANCE. THE UTILITY OF THESE OTHERWISE CAPABLE PEOPLE HAS INVARIABLY BEEN UNDERMINED BY THEIR LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH THE LOCAL SCENE, CIS, ETC. THE THIRD POSITION HAS BEEN LEFT VACANT FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS. DEA/WASHINGTON SHOULD DEFINE ONCE AND FOR ALL THE VALUE IT PLACES ON ADO AND IF IT DECIDES TO ABOLISH THE THIRD SLOT, SHOULD AT LEAST ENSURE THAT NO GAPS OCCUR WHEN ONE OF THE TWO ASSIGNED OFFICERS IS ON LEAVE. FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS ADO HAS BEEN REDUCED TO ONE OFFICER (THE OTHER HAVING TAKEN EXTENDED HOME LEAVE).

(1) YES, THEY WOULD BE QUALIFIED, AND IN FACT THIS IS WHAT THEY DO. DEA'S CURRENT MANDATE, AS FAR AS THE HOST GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED, HOWEVER, IS TO SUPPORT THE LATTER'S EFFORTS IN NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION. THE HOST GOVERNMENT IS NOT UNAWARE THAT DEA ENGAGES IN UNILATERAL INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY, BUT SO LONG AS THE ADO EXISTS OFFICIALLY TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE GOP, HAS NO OFFICIAL GROUNDS TO COMPLAIN. WERE DEA'S MANDATE TO BE PUBLICLY DEFINED AS TARGETING THE LARGE DRUG SMUGGLING NETWORKS, THE GOP PROBABLY WOULD REQUEST SOME SHARING OF INTELLIGENCE AS

AS QUID PRO QUO FOR ALLOWING DEA TO USE  
PARAGUAY AS A BASE OF OPERATIONS, ESPECIALLY IF WE  
ELIMINATED ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT ENTIRELY. UNDER CURRENT  
CONDITIONS OF CURRUPTION WITHIN THE GOP, WE COULD NOT  
SHARE OUR INTELLIGENCE WITHOUT RISK OF COMPROMISE.  
BRIGGS

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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